



# MAGAZINE

PRICE TWOPENCE

FEBRUARY 1953



The *I.C.I. Magazine* is published for the interest of all who work in I.C.I., and its contents are contributed largely by people in I.C.I. It is edited by Richard Keane and printed at The Kynoch Press, Birmingham, and is published every month by Imperial Chemical Industries Limited, Imperial Chemical House, S.W.1. Telephone: VICToria 4486. The editor is glad to consider articles for publication, and payment will be made for those accepted.

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FRONT COVER: *The library at Hawthorndale. Hawthorndale and Jealott's Hill are the two research stations of Central Agricultural Control and are alongside each other on the hills above Maidenhead in Berkshire.*

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

KEVIN FITZGERALD is in charge of publicity for Central Agricultural Control. Before this he was head of our Dublin office. To Kevin FitzGerald writing is almost second nature: in his spare time he writes thrillers, and his last book was published in September under the title *A Throne of Bayonets*. Previous Magazine articles: "The English in Ireland," "The Irish in England," and "How to Climb Mountains and Influence People."

"IVY" IRVINE, who runs the Alkali Division Information Service, is a familiar contributor to the Magazine. Previous articles: "In Praise of Bulk" and "A Gourmet at Large."

H. E. JACKSON is chairman of Metals Division, a position he has held for the last eight years. He was appointed to the Metals Division board in 1933 and became acting chairman in 1942. He has worked with I.C.I. and its forerunners for the last forty years—since 1912, when he joined Nobels.

PETER RAWSON sent us his article from Karachi, where he works for I.C.I. (Pakistan). He joined the Company in 1947 after serving with the Royal Artillery during the war. He took a degree in classics at Oxford University. He is interested in the theatre and hopes one day to write a successful play.

NORMAN VIGARS may perhaps best be described as a photographic journalist. He specialises in pictorial features, of which he has already done two for us: on the Recreation Club at Ardeer and on the annual youth camp of Metals Division.

## JEALOTT'S HILL LOOKS BACK

## I.C.I.'s Agricultural Research Station celebrates its Silver Jubilee

By Kevin FitzGerald

Twenty-five years ago I.C.I. set out to prove by doing it for themselves what chemicals could do for agriculture. Today the results of this work are the common stock in trade of farmers the world over and have led to revolutionary changes in farming practice. In this article Mr. FitzGerald recalls the early days. "The atmosphere," he says, "was electric with brains and endeavour."

**I**N June 1928, when I first went there, Jealott's Hill consisted, roughly, of two wooden sheds and a hole in the ground. The farm itself was being brought under control and a few more or less ramshackle buildings were being adapted to the needs of research. I was a probationer and considered myself extremely lucky to have been offered a salary of £150 a year, less unemployment insurance, less national health insurance. I had a room in the Red Lion at Bracknell which required exactly this sum—permitting only a pint of cider on Friday nights when I was paid—and I walked the 4½ miles to and from my work each morning and evening.

The Research Station of those days consisted of young men recently qualified, most of whom have since become famous in the agricultural world. The soil chemist of those days is now the Director of the Station. The botanist is Professor of Agriculture at Oxford; the Professors of Agriculture at Edinburgh and of Agricultural Botany at Durham were both young men at Jealott's Hill; the then resident director, Mr. H. J. Page, became Director of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. The whole atmosphere was electric with brains and endeavour.

There were no amenities for the staff of any sort or kind. We made our lunch—if we had lunch—off bread and cheese and beer at the nearby Leather Bottle, and everybody worked until late in the evening because there were no conflicting attractions except those of Maidenhead, which quickly palled.

I was attached to Mr. John Proctor, who was then, and still is, the Recorder of field experiments. For days on end I plodded with a measuring chain up and down the big randomised blocks of latin squares which were the first fertilizer experiments at Jealott's Hill. Sometimes with a pair of hand clippers I cut little bunches of grass from a dozen or so tiny plots, not realising then that this work was the whole huge grassland campaign of today in embryo. I did plenty of odd jobs about the farm as well and filled in the weekends by trying to take photographs of the experiments with cameras attached to the big kites in which I was then interested. All that seems very old-fashioned in these days of advanced aerial

knowledge of grass plants, and a somewhat complicated system of fencing and watering. There were already a dozen or so examples of this system scattered about the country, all under close experimental conditions. Indeed, although the Station could hardly be said to have started when I arrived there, much extension work was already going on all over England. The late Andrew Manson was in charge of outside experiments and was putting up record mileages and astonishing spells of night driving throughout Great Britain in his personal care for the work in hand.

In the autumn of 1928 I left Jealott's Hill and was posted to Stafford as what was then called an Agricultural Adviser. Most of my work consisted of looking after rotational grazing experiments in my district and half a dozen large-scale arable experiments. All these were controlled from Jealott's Hill. I had one, I remember, on sugar beet, which was over 10 acres in extent and consisted of hundreds of randomised plots. To lift this experiment I employed, just before Christmas, a small army of "heel-clickers" from one of the boot factories in Stafford. One or two of them, I think, remained on the land for good.

In the early spring of 1929 I went back to Jealott's Hill for a visit. There were already considerable changes. Martin Jones was laying down his classic grassland experiment which, among other striking examples, showed later on that a closely fenced plot of ordinary grassland, if completely untouched by hand or the grazing animal, would revert to jungle, complete



LONG-TERM ROTATION EXPERIMENT at Jealott's Hill designed to compare the effect of various arable rotations on crop production and soil fertility



POT-CULTURE CAGE at Jealott's Hill where small-scale experiments are conducted before the stage of field trials

with sizeable bushes, in a matter of from three to five years. The research building itself was fast nearing completion, and in a dutch barn near the cowshed a fearsome-looking machine, with steam leaking out of it in all directions, was drying grass. This was almost the first, if not the first, grass dryer to operate in this country. There were, too, certain concrete structures which were being used for early experiments on molassed grass silage. Here again one did not realise the beginnings of changes and techniques which were to spread and to become woven into the farming pattern within less than twenty years.

At that time the hideous Victorian Gothic building which is

now Hawthondale had been converted into a residential club for members of the Research Station and for agricultural visitors. The bread and cheese days were over and a luncheon was served at Hawthondale for all those working at the Station. The staff was already double the number of less than a year before.

At midsummer the Research Station was declared open by Sir Alfred Mond (later the first Lord Melchett) in the presence of a very large gathering, representative of the whole agricultural industry. Sir Alfred on that day was an extremely happy man: it was his vision, allied to the energy and drive of

Sir Frederick Keeble, which had brought the Station into being. There was a big luncheon, important speeches were made, and afterwards the gathering, split into many parties, was escorted round the farm by those of us who knew the way. Everything was still very new.

My next visit of any length was in the summer of 1934. A film was being made of the Company's agricultural work and I had been lent to the producer as agricultural adviser. It was then possible to see clearly that the foundations of a great future had been laid at Jealott's Hill. The whole farm was in a high state of cultivation and nearly all of it was devoted to experimental work of one kind and another. From all over the country large parties of farmers were arriving each week to be shown the work in progress and, above all, to spend many hours talking about grassland and seeing the grassland experiments. Already the accommodation, planned for considerable expansion, was proving inadequate, and indeed our work on the film, despite every assistance, was much hampered by the constant movements of a large staff engaged in their work all over the farm and in every building.

During the war years much of the normal experimental work at Jealott's Hill came to an end, although all the deep research which has led to such modern wonders as the development of the so-called selective weedkillers was done then. Long before this the building at Hawthondale had been taken over to house, as it still does, a big staff devoted to researches into the more purely chemical side of agricultural activity. Hawthondale, with its extension buildings, bears no relation today to the quiet club of the early thirties, nor for that matter does Jealott's Hill itself. There, too, additions have been made over the years which could not have been imagined by the original workers. But a sense of history and of continuity has been maintained. The two wooden sheds, just as they were, are carefully preserved. The old silage containers are still there, but not the first grass dryer, which throughout its long life was being rebuilt almost weekly. The farm is very different, and the visitor requires a comprehensive guide-book and the services of a guide before learning much about what is going on.

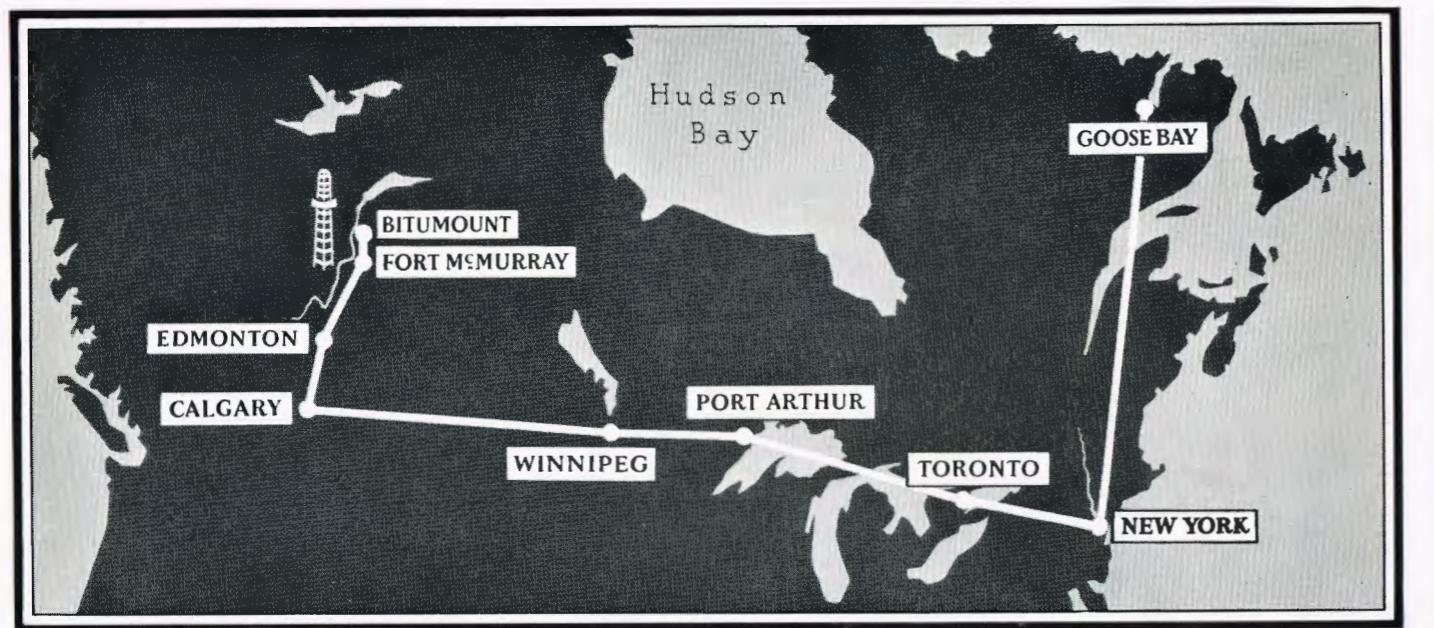
There is no longer any need at Jealott's Hill or elsewhere to show by experiment or by demonstration

that nitrogen will increase the yield of cereal crops, produce out-of-season grass and raise the protein content of hay. We have already forgotten that in 1928 those things needed not only to be shown but to be proved, since a knowledge of them is nowadays a normal part of the farmers' equipment.

The work at Jealott's Hill and at Hawthondale has changed. The Persian farmer, for example, has been largely freed from the locust curse because in the basement at Hawthondale there are glass pens of locusts, and the Somerset grazier, afflicted with "teart" in his pastures, has reason to be grateful to Jealott's Hill. From all over the world problems are sent to the Research Station. For many of these there is still no answer, but if the past is any guide there can be little doubt that 1953, which marks the silver jubilee of Jealott's Hill, will prove to be only another signpost on the long road of successful agricultural endeavour.



ANALYSIS OF SOIL DRAINAGE WATER to test the chemical content. This is done by means of specially designed apparatus called the lysimeter.



# NO DAY TOO LONG . . .

Being the story of an adventurous journey by Dr. A. Fleck (Deputy Chairman of I.C.I.), Mr. H. E. Jackson (Chairman, Metals Division) and Mr. N. B. Muir (Metals Division Research Department), who recently visited Canada to assess potential new markets for I.C.I. products, including non-ferrous metals, in the rapidly expanding industries of the Alberta oilfields.

By H. E. Jackson (Chairman, Metals Division)

**A** HOWLING gale in Iceland; a cemetery in Labrador; a hotel bedroom with no bed; lightning overhead and rainbows round our tail; a new breed of bulldog and a wolfhound (?) with the biggest feet in the world. These are just a few of the things we certainly never expected to encounter when we left London to have a look at the new Canadian oilfields. Not all of us were prepared, either, for the exertions demanded of those who travel abroad with a deputy chairman of the Company. An ability to do without sleep, a passion for being constantly on the move and a toughness of fibre denied to ordinary men are apparently essential qualifications for the honour!

The only dependable fact throughout the whole 8000-mile trip was that nothing would go according to plan. We had an idea that when we arrived in Alberta we might find conditions a bit primitive; but that was only to be expected of a pioneering venture. But as we boarded our Stratocruiser on the first leg of the journey we thought that at least we could rely on B.O.A.C. to land us in Montreal promptly, comfortably and with no disagreeable memories.

We were soon disillusioned. Before we had crossed the

English coast we were advised that for technical reasons we must take the long way round, via Prestwick and Iceland. Now some people might think we should have welcomed this unexpected glimpse of a new country. We can only say, from bitter experience, that Iceland at 3 a.m. has nothing to recommend it. Landing in unnatural daylight and a howling gale, we thought for a moment that some Hollywoodian magic had dropped us on the moon. The few passengers hardy enough to tackle the hazardous walk to the airport "hotel" were, however, fortified for the return journey by a cup of lukewarm coffee.

Glad to be airborne again, we dozed our way across the Atlantic until a dizzy 360-degree turn warned us that all might not be well with our aircraft. It wasn't. A smiling stewardess assured us that, even minus one engine, we were quite safe, but that all the same we were putting down at Goose Bay, twenty miles distant. If Iceland was unwelcoming, it had nothing to learn from Labrador. Our promised five-hour wait for repairs stretched itself to twelve with the news that, after all, a fresh plane would be flown up from New York to complete the journey. The uproarious excitement of the hotel

having soon exhausted itself, we passed an hour or so walking briskly round the local beauty spot—a large and well-kept cemetery.

Apart from the fact that we travelled there via New York (where the baggage porters staged a sit-down strike in our honour), the last few hours of our flight to Montreal were uneventful. I.C.I.'s famous hospitality had, however, stood the strain well, and even at 4.30 a.m. there to meet us at the airport was a representative of Canadian Industries Ltd. En route to the hotel, Lord McGowan's well-known motto—often to be repeated—was quoted for the first time: "No day too long, no journey too arduous, in the service of the Company."

Montreal, of course, was still a long way from our destination, so one afternoon we boarded a plane which in the space of two hours carried us—mercifully without incident—to Toronto. After a brief halt we set out on the long hop west to Winnipeg, and within an hour of taking off we were over the Great Lakes, first Lake Huron and then Lake Superior.

For the first time we got a true impression of the size of these immense inland seas and could appreciate the possibility of their upheaval by storms as fierce as those challenging the high seas. We noticed that Lake Superior was dotted with a long line of mathematically spaced cargo ships, carrying iron ore for the steel mills at Detroit and elsewhere. Our interest in them, however, flagged suddenly as our plane hit a thunderstorm; what were we, anyway—clay pigeons shot at by darts of lightning? But still another surprise was in store, for our successful escape from this hair-raising experience was crowned, as we emerged once more into the sunlight, with the spectacle of two concentric rainbows around the tail of our plane.

The four hundred miles between Port Arthur and Winnipeg were perhaps the most impressive of the whole flight. This vast expanse of uninhabited and probably uncharted territory—thousands of small lakes, strips of rocky land overgrown with scrub and stunted firs—provided an unvarying landscape for almost two hours. It was a sobering thought that early pioneers were able to lay a railroad across this wilderness and so open up the West.

As the plane crossed the Ontario/Manitoba boundary this rugged territory gave way quite suddenly to fertile wheat-growing prairies, so flat that they might have been laid out by some gigantic steam-roller. At dusk our 1350-mile journey brought us to Winnipeg, and the last eight hundred miles across the prairies to Calgary were covered in darkness.

Now Calgary, like Edmonton, is a boom town, cheerful, optimistic and prosperous. Alberta still makes most of her money out of grain and cattle, but the discovery and development of oilfields beneath her fertile plains has brought new interests, new industries and ever-swelling crowds of new inhabitants to her towns. The increase in population was, in fact, what struck us most forcibly when, cramped and weary

after our long flight, we arrived in Calgary, for hotel reservations clearly meant nothing in a town where possession was all ten points of the law.

Our negotiations with the management were protracted; let it suffice to say that a deputy chairman of I.C.I. was finally vouchsafed a room magnificently furnished with sideboards, tables and chairs but no bed, and that two of the tiny rooms reluctantly opened to the rest of the party were enlivened by the activity of the neighbouring Canadian Pacific Railway.

But at least we were in the heart of the Alberta oilfields and could begin the real business of our Canadian adventure. The oil industry there has expanded at a fantastic rate since the war, turnover shooting up (no pun intended!) from \$1 million in 1946 to \$13 million in 1951. The government of Alberta is guarding carefully against abuse, controlling the amount of oil brought up to the surface by each well, and levying a royalty of 12% of its value. Reserves are estimated at one billion barrels (35 billion gallons), and large-scale exploration is continuing with every prospect of further profitable discoveries.

Some three hundred miles north of Edmonton the oil-bearing stratum outcrops on to the surface and is clearly visible along the banks of the Athabasca river. The stratum of oil sand exposed on the banks is some 150 ft. thick, and the sand itself is dark brown or black, smelling strongly of crude oil when broken. We were told that each square mile of oil-bearing sand might yield up to 200 million barrels of oil. About three years ago the Alberta government erected a small pilot plant for separating oil from this "opencast" formation,



ON THE BANKS OF LAKE LOUISE in the Canadian Rockies. Left to right: Mr. N. B. Muir (Metals Division Research Department), Mr. H. E. Jackson (Chairman of Metals Division), Mr. Tom Ross (Development Manager, Canadian Industries Limited) and Dr. A. Fleck (Deputy Chairman of I.C.I.).



EXAMINING AN OIL SAND QUARRY at Bitumount in the Province of Alberta in Canada. Here the sand is saturated with oil and this is believed to be the most extensive outcrop of oil-bearing sand in the world.

and it was north to Bitumount that we turned after visiting oilfields and refineries in the Edmonton district. And thereby, as may be expected, hangs a tale.

A small charter plane took us first to the small town of Fort McMurray. Luckily we had all seen our share of "Westerns," so we were quite at home there. True, it was not the sheriff on a white horse who greeted us on arrival, but it was an equally picturesque character—none other than Mayor Paul Schmidt, who emigrated to Canada in 1912 and still bears the duelling scars he won at Heidelberg University. Everything else ran true to form—the saloon bar where, under the steady and silent stare of numerous Indians, we swallowed a hasty half-pint before sidling rapidly out through the swing doors; the trading post of the Hudson's Bay Trading Co., where one can buy anything from iron bedsteads to tinned foods; the trip down the Athabasca in a flat-bottomed skow; the formal tea party to which we were entertained by local celebrities, including the drug-store owner and the lay preacher (an Englishman, by the way); and the general store where, amid much kindly advice from the proprietor, we were all fitted out with rubber overshoes for our trip to the wilds.

How wild it was we were soon to learn. Before leaving McMurray our pilot explained laconically that he was carrying only just enough petrol for the return journey, as he wanted to ease the landing and take-off at Bitumount. When, after flying over sixty miles of muskeg, trees and sand ridges, we touched down in the middle of a virgin forest, we saw what he meant.

This was real pioneer country, where only the fit and hardy can survive. Even the insects which infest the territory are

built on robust lines, and a particular brand of horse-fly—measuring an inch and a half in length and known to the locals as bulldogs—soon earned our deepest respect. Mounting guard over the adjacent bunkhouse was a nameless creature—one at least of its ancestors must have been a wolf—which we were assured was a dog. Standing a good three feet high, thin, mangy and decrepit, this animal was distinguished by the biggest canine feet in the world and a marked tendency to knock-knees fore and aft. Although a friendly creature, it earned the displeasure of more than one of the visitors by its habit of rubbing itself against their legs and trampling on their feet.

We were also greeted on arrival by the entire human population of Bitumount—two caretakers, whom we immediately christened Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday. Mercifully these exiles had not forgotten the soothing effect of good food, so they fed us heartily before introducing us to our overnight accommodation. This, to put it kindly, was primitive. Each cubicle in the rough wooden bunkhouse contained four pieces of furniture—two bare bunks, one wooden box and one large "gun" for self-defence against

the hordes of aggressive insects. We remembered the warning words of our pilot, and prayed that the right wind would blow in the morning to speed us on our way. Bitumount, though a refreshing experience, was no place to be marooned indefinitely!

Our prayers were well and truly answered, and as dawn broke the wind rose to gale force. We took off, just managing to clear the trees, and for thirty minutes endured a most uneven battle—the full fury of nature against a pitifully frail and inadequate aircraft. As we were flung backwards, forwards and sideways, our heads battering remorselessly against the fuselage, we thought with affection of the large, safe Stratocruiser of which once we had had the temerity to complain. But the faithful little flivver held out, and—could it have been the inspiration of Bitumount's pioneer spirit?—her passengers survived to tell the tale.

A tale of adventure, or so it seemed to us, of strange places glimpsed only by night, of delays and difficulties and even dangers. But so much more than that. In less than two weeks we had traversed Canada from her eastern seaboard to the Rockies, sampling communities as ludicrously different as Montreal and Fort McMurray, Toronto and Bitumount.

Everywhere in Canada we found the same vigour and determination, the same uplifting sense of optimism and enterprise. Our story, for all its personal and at times frivolous asides, may have its place in history; for it records I.C.I.'s close association with Canada at a moment when that country is reaching out towards new greatness. In spite of the vicissitudes of our journey we count ourselves fortunate in having seen at first hand so much achievement, so much promise.



## PANTOMIME-1953

By Norman Vigars

Christmas and New Year parties for the children have long been a Billingham speciality. One of the biggest of these parties—900 strong—saw a performance of pantomime at the Stockton Hippodrome on 3rd January. Here is the record of our photographer Norman Vigars.

FOR more years than some of them care to remember the men and women of the various departments of I.C.I. at Billingham have got together to do something worth while for the children and pensioners at Christmastime.

In the summer there is an outing, usually to the seaside. But in winter, just as the memories of Christmastime are waning in young minds, there is the pantomime.

I spoke to Mr. Ellar from Sulphuric Acid Section and Mr. Pugh from Engineering Workshops, who with their committees were responsible for planning and running the affair which brought nearly a thousand old and young—mostly young—folk to the Stockton-on-Tees Hippodrome on the second Saturday after Christmas. They both told me how popular the annual pantomime had become and how it had taken the place of organised parties. As they put it, many of the children had a surfeit of parties around Christmastime.

Christmas presents were numerous and more elaborate than in the years before the war. Christmas games and songs had been a daily affair right up to the last day of school term. So a pantomime it has become, and pantomime it looks like staying.

The planning for this event starts months before. The money is raised voluntarily by all the time-honoured methods—concerts, whist drives and sweepstakes. Mr. Eric Metcalfe, manager of Stockton's Hippodrome, is approached weeks ahead, and a large-scale bulk booking for a Saturday matinée is arranged. Then, with a lot of other details, but no fear of weather, the committee gets the whole thing under way.

On this particular Saturday afternoon in January the weather was appalling. There had been some snow and it was then a bitterly cold sleet that drove round "Hippodrome Corner." But they streamed in by tens and hundreds. Small Wellington



BEFORE THE CURTAIN GOES UP



—AND AFTER



PLEASE TEACHER . . .

boots were removed and raincoats hurriedly discarded. For such a young audience there was a remarkably quiet air of expectancy which I, for one, could share with those youngsters. I have always felt a warm sense of the magic that lies the other side of the dark curtain. For me the show always begins at the first note of the orchestra tuning up. These kids were the same, and it was by their quietness that they showed it.

Then everything followed by the plan. Overture away,



NOT A MOMENT WASTED

house lights down and curtain up. There was the chorus in an old-world fairground scene, getting into the swing of things with great zest, as they knew they had a mainly young and very lively audience.

Jovial veteran of the variety stage Frank Franks told me after the show: "You know at once when you've a young audience, and you adapt at once to them. I always do a different show for the children," he said; "more simple and often more fun."

Frank Franks, himself a Geordie, and his cast, drawn



MAKING FRIENDS BACKSTAGE. Left to right: Joy Carol, Donald Lee, Irene Franklyn, Derek Neil.

mainly from the north of England, presented a pantomime which was at least based on the original fairy story of Red Riding Hood. There were a wolf, a comic grandmother, a fifteen-year-old Red Riding Hood (who did not look older than 10 even from the stalls), a pretty heroine and thigh-slapping principal boy. The music was lively and up to date, as would be expected in any pantomime. But the slapstick of Franks and his comedians was the thing that caught them. Since primitive man first fell over a log and sent his family into fits of laughter, that laughter of slapstick comedy has echoed down the centuries. There's nothing new in it, some might say. Grimaldi did it, Leno carried on the tradition, and hundreds after him did the same.

Probably all but the youngest of this audience were cinema fans; quite a number were followers of the new plaything television. But this was real, it was alive—and how they loved it!

When an egg had broken over somebody's head and the custard pies followed thick and fast, an aged pensioner near me cried above the children's yells: "Oh, he's done it again!" and deafened his neighbours with a roar.



ORGANISERS OF SUCCESS compare notes. Left to right: Mr. Pugh (Engineering Workshops), and Mr. Ellar (Sulphuric Acid Section).

There was a brief interval, just long enough to consume a large ice cream tub brought round by the officials, and the show was on again.

A troupe of girls and children gave colour to the dance; performing bears in a circus sequence and breathtaking stuff by a trio of Continental acrobats to draw "oh's" and "ah's" from even the most sophisticated.

As they trooped out into the weather that had not improved throughout the afternoon the faces of the children showed they were oblivious of it. Clutching oranges and mysterious paper bags that were distributed at the exits, they went out with their parents into the evening with a warm glow about them; no longer as quietly as they had come in, for they had seen great things through a child's eyes.

Messrs. Ellar and Pugh met on the stairs and mopped their brows. With their assistants ushering out the last of the

visitors they congratulated each other. "I never heard one grumble," said Ellar, "and that's good enough for me."

One could not agree more.

# A DINNER OF HERBS

By A. S. Irvine (Alkali Division)

Flavouring with herbs can add such exquisite delectability to food that herbs are worth growing in every garden—even in a window box. Moreover they are easy to grow; in fact some herbs can be relied on to beat the weeds. Here is an account of the different herbs and of the uses to which each can be put.

THE first thing that I want to say is that, by and large, herbs are not hard to grow. In fact some of them, like tansy and the mints, are such rampant growers that the difficulty is to keep them in bounds. The next thing is that, with a few exceptions such as parsley, herbs do better on poor soil. Not only does a struggle for existence seem to improve their flavour, but the absence of the lush growth that you get on a rich soil makes them stand the frost better, so that winter casualties are few and far between. Thus there is no better place for a herb garden than the corner where the builder has dumped all his rubbish. And if it be a mound, rejoice: cover it with soil and make it into a herb rockery that, if well set out, can delight the eye as well as the nose on a hot summer evening.

Again, if you have no garden it is surprising what you can grow in a good window box on your kitchen sill. Of course, in such situations you are somewhat limited—you cannot grow fennel for your fish there, a plant that grows six feet high in my garden—but you can grow a varied selection of little plants that will make all the difference to your sauces and salads. Let us examine a window box collection in detail.

Parsley is, of course, a must. Unfortunately the English tightly-curled parsley is so popular for decoration that it is much in demand for that alone. If your window be large, grow French parsley as well; if it be small, grow only the French, for its flavour is better.

Chervil is a pleasant little parsley-like herb that is said to improve the flavour of other herbs. Thus it is rather swamped by the rest of the ingredients of its most usual home—*sauce vinaigrette*—but is very good alone, chopped fine in sauces based on the liquor in which fish has been poached.

Chives, the smallest and mildest onion, is the better for much cutting. The bulbs, helped with a little richness in the soil, seem to go on and on making other bulbs however much you cut the grass, which is the part of the plant you use.

Garlic comes next to mind, an excellent vermifuge and better addition to salads and Mediterranean dishes and a must for curries. It makes rather taller growth than chives, but you can in moderation use the grass while it is growing and store the bulbs for winter use. In towns perhaps it would be better to use the grass (which is milder) heavily in the summer and

buy the imported dry bulbs for winter use. If garlic be too strong for you, then try *rocambole*—if you can find it.

Thyme is a useful savoury herb that is too well known to need description. In a window box a recumbent variety might be useful, but, as a change from the greens, the golden lemon-scented thyme might well be grown, as of all the thymes it stands winter cutting best.

Sage, too, is well known. To my mind the red-leaved variety has the better flavour and is somewhat less straggly in growth.

Pot Marjoram, a garden variety of a well-known chalk-down roadside flower, grows readily if somewhat untidily. It has a pleasant savoury flavour and makes all the difference to stuffed hearts.

Winter Savory, as its name implies, is another useful stuffing herb. Finely chopped it is a good accompaniment to broad beans.

Sweet Cicely has both a beautiful leaf for decoration and a quaint liquorice-like flavour for fish stuffings, sauces and salads. It is a rampant grower and seeds itself freely.

Bush Basil, the informing flavour in ragouts, sausages and turtle soup, is not too easy to grow, as it is not very hardy. If it can be grown it is very useful for all manner of savoury purposes—forcemeats, rissoles, and *pâtes maison* made up from odds and ends.

Finally, to make up the dozen, what type of the dozen-odd common mints can I recommend? Perhaps for a window box *peamint* might be the best, but this old-fashioned dwarf mint is very hard to find nowadays. It might be wisest to take your courage in both hands and grow *applemint*, pinching it down religiously and hoping for the best when you come back from your holiday.

So there's your window box—admirable if you have a window sill the size of an average desk. But before we go on to something larger let me digress towards mint sauce. My childhood memories of mint sauce are harrowing, especially as I have never liked vinegar. I came across a better variety in Pakistan, where a superior mint sauce—a great deal of chopped fresh mint, plus a little chopped onion, sage and parsley, scarcely more than damped with sweetened vinegar—



HERB GARDEN IN FLOWER. Plants in the background from left to right are fennel, lovage, blue coco bean and tree onion. In the near foreground the plant in the centre with purple flowers is chives; behind that is pot marjoram, and behind that again is bergamot.

appeared with curries under the name of *chatnee*. Finally, however, after travelling half-way round the world and back I came upon the prince of mint sauces—in a recipe book in Hartford, Cheshire. I give you with commendation my version of Mr. Ambrose Heath's version of this excellent confection.

### MINT SAUCE CREOLE

To a double pan add a teaspoonful of sugar and a teaspoonful or so of wine vinegar. Then put in a good handful of mint leaves, chopped up fairly finely. Add to this about half a pint of good seasoned stock or gravy. Heat it up in the double pan, but do not boil it, or the mint will become bitter.

Next, if you have a garden. The accompanying plan shows one way of planting a collection of forty-nine different herbs, all of which have some use round and about the place. The trellis is provided, first to have something to break the wind, secondly for tying back the six-footers like lovage, and thirdly for growing nasturtiums and blue coco beans up. The former is a salading and the latter a vegetable, but they are both very useful and of an excellent colour for background, so you must excuse their intrusion in an otherwise genuine body of strictly flavouring plants.

I shall not lay down details of soil further than I have already done. I shall not plague you with cultural details, as they will vary from soil to soil, and most herbs grow anywhere

far too readily. But I will say that all your mints are best planted in old buckets with the bottoms knocked out sunk up to their rims, otherwise in a few years you will have an excellent mint garden to show your neighbours and very little else. For the rest, please yourself what you grow and where you grow it. For I quote what old Parkinson wrote 300 years ago: "To prescribe one form for every man to follow were too great presumption and folly."

So on page 48 you find a list, complete enough I hope to raise your curiosity. You may not want to grow them all; you may not have room even if you had the inclination; so the best I can do is to spotlight a second choice for the time when the window box grows into a corner of the yard.

*Tree Onions* take up more space than chives and are much stronger. Their grass seems to grow even under the snow, and they are almost as hardy as *Welsh onions*, another all-the-year-round grass producer. The great joy is the little button onions that tree onions produce by way of a flower, one growing on top of the other unto the third and fourth generation. In the late summer and autumn they outflavour any shallot for grills and curries and are well worth the finicky trouble of peeling them.

*Lovage*, a tall back-row-of-the-chorus plant, is very much front-row in flavour. Its hollow stems can be candied if you have the inclination—or the sugar. But all the year round till the frosts finally cut it down it is an excellent substitute for celery flavour in stews and salads.

Bay needs little introduction. Its chief use for me is gipping up the odd matron rabbit that falls into my stewpot from time to time. Bay, with *rosemary*, works wonders with old beef: soak your boned joint for an hour or so in a cupful of wine vinegar, seasoned with salt, pepper, sugar and mustard, and flavoured with chopped-up bay and rosemary, turning the joint over from time to time. If the meat be very dry, use half a cup each of oil and vinegar, whisking them together with the

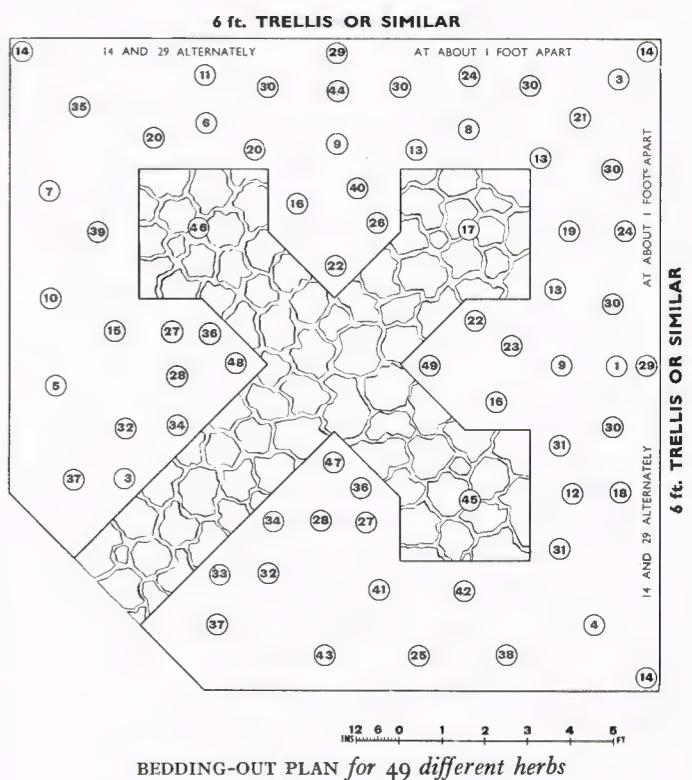
seasoning into a thickish suspension before soaking the beef. When the time comes, cook the meat in a closed baking tin, still in the vinegar, using a hot oven (450° F.). Even if this cannot utterly cope with the meat it will still give you a good gravy. With ewe mutton, repeat the drill, using mint and garlic instead of bay and rosemary.

*Fennel* is the fish flavouring next in importance to chervil. If the fish be grilled with it, fennel can char a beautiful flavour into the oiliest of them. If it be poached with sour wine or cider, snipped-up fennel flavours even the homely cod. But beware—make your sauce with flour, fat and milk first, and cook it well, before you add the fennel and poaching liquor from the fish, else the sauce will curdle and another rift will appear in the matrimonial lute.

Tarragon is a strong and bitter herb which must be used in salads with discretion, though it is quite good in small quantities. If a malt vinegar be saturated with the leaves it takes up the flavour and is very useful for winter pickles and salads. Otherwise its flavour is the informing flavour in the true *sauce tartare* that one seldom tastes these days even with eggs and olive oil getting more and more available, if not cheaper.

*Borage* I use entirely for cups in the summer, though the flowers, along with those of alkanet, bergamot and nasturtiums, are used to decorate fancy salads, or melon when the exchequer can run to it. Borage must be a dead loss to all seed merchants, because once it is in a garden it seeds itself fast and furiously. And, like parsley, it very often grows best where it sows itself.

If you have an acquisitive bent, why not make collections? In my garden there are ten mints, six or seven thymes and as many varieties of onions, not including the onions I grow decoratively in the rockery. These all "arrove" and were not the result of conscious collection. Why keep everything in the herbary? Many of the thymes grow better in the rockery, and



## WELL-KNOWN HERBS

—which parts to use and how to use them—

No.	TRIVIAL NAME	TYPE	LATIN NAME	PART USED	USES
1	Alecost	Quinqueennial	<i>Tanacetum balsamitum</i>	Leaf	D G P
2	Alkanet	Biennial	<i>Anchusa italic a dropmorensis</i>	Whole flower	D G H
3	Angelica	Triennial	<i>Angelica officinalis</i>	Leaf, stem	B D G
4	Applemint	Perennial	<i>Mentha rotundifolia</i>	Leaf	C G N S
5	Balm	Perennial	<i>Melissa officinalis variegata</i>	Leaf	D H M
6	Basil (bush)	Annual	<i>Ocimum minimum</i>	Leaf	C G M S V
7	Bay	Perennial	<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Leaf	C F M
8	Bergamot	Triennial	<i>Monarda didyma</i>	Whole flower, leaf	A G P
9	Borage	Annual	<i>Borago officinalis</i>	Whole flower, leaf, stem	B D G
10	Camphor	Perennial	<i>Chrysanthemum balsamitum</i>	Leaf	G L P
11	Caraway	Annual	<i>Carum carvi</i>	Seed	B C D
12	Chervil	Annual	<i>Anthriscus cerefolium</i>	Leaf	A F G M S V
13	Chives	Triennial	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	Leaf	C F G M N S V
14	Coco bean	Annual	<i>Phaseolus vulgaris</i>	Pod	Vegetable
15	Coriander	Annual	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>	Leaf, seed	B C G M
16	Cotton lavender	Perennial	<i>Santolina chamaecyparissus</i>	Leaf	L P
17	Creeping mint	Perennial	<i>Mentha requienii</i>	Leaf	C G
18	Fennel	Perennial	<i>Foeniculum officinale</i>	Leaf	A C F G M
19	Fragrant cranesbill	Perennial	<i>Geranium macrorrhizum</i>	Whole flower, leaf	A G N
20	Garlic	Annual	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Leaf, root	C F G M V
21	Hyssop	Perennial	<i>Hyssopus officinalis rubra</i>	Whole flower, leaf	A G H L P
22	Lad's love	Perennial	<i>Artemisia abrotanum</i>	Leaf	D L
23	Lavender	Perennial	<i>Lavendula vera spica</i>	Whole flower, leaf	A G H L M P V
24	Lovage	Perennial	<i>Ligusticum levisticum</i>	Leaf	G M
25	Mace	Quinqueennial	<i>Achillea decolorans</i>	Leaf	L P
26	Marigold (pot)	Annual	<i>Calendula officinalis</i>	Petal	D G M
27	Marjoram (pot)	Perennial	<i>Origanum onites</i>	Whole flower, leaf	G M S
28	Marjoram (sweet)	Annual	<i>Origanum marjorana</i>	Whole flower, leaf	A G M S
29	Nasturtium	Annual	<i>Tropaeolum majus</i>	Whole flower, leaf, seed	A C G M
30	Onion (tree)	Triennial	<i>Allium cepa proliferum</i>	Leaf, seed	C D G M S
31	Onion (Welsh)	Triennial	<i>Allium fistulosum</i>	Leaf	G M S
32	Opium poppy	Annual	<i>Papaver somniferum rubra</i>	Seed	A B C
33	Parsley (English)	Biennial	<i>Carum petroselinum</i>	Leaf	A F M S
34	Parsley (French)	Biennial	<i>Carum petroselinum</i>	Leaf	C F G M N S
35	Peamint	Perennial	<i>Mentha citrata</i>	Leaf	C D G M N P S
36	Rocambole	Triennial	<i>Allium scorodoprasum</i>	Leaf, root	G M S V
37	Rosemary	Perennial	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Whole flower, leaf	A G H L M P S
38	Rue	Perennial	<i>Ruta graveolens</i>	Leaf	G L
39	Sage	Quadrennial	<i>Salvia officinalis rubrifolia</i>	Leaf	C G H L M S
40	Sage (clary)	Annual	<i>Salvia sclarea</i>	Leaf	G M P S
41	Savory (summer)	Annual	<i>Satureja hortensis</i>	Whole flower, leaf	G M N S
42	Savory (winter)	Quinqueennial	<i>Satureja montana</i>	Leaf	F G M S
43	Sweet Cicely	Perennial	<i>Myrrhis odorata</i>	Leaf	A F G M
44	Tarragon	Perennial	<i>Artemesia dracunculus sativus</i>	Leaf	B C F G M S V
45	Thyme (Azoresian)	Triennial	<i>Thymus azoricus</i>	Whole flower, leaf	C G H L M P S
46	Thyme (Corsican)	Triennial	<i>Thymus herba-barona</i>	Whole flower, leaf	C G H L M P S
47	Thyme (fragrant)	Triennial	<i>Thymus vulgaris fragrantissimus</i>	Whole flower, leaf	C G H L M P S
48	Thyme (lemon)	Triennial	<i>Thymus serpyllum citriodorus</i>	Whole flower, leaf	C G H L M P S
49	Wormwood	Perennial	<i>Artemesia absinthium</i>	Whole flower, seed	D L V

## KEY TO USES

A = Foliage, etc., suitable for artistic decoration.  
 B = Dressing for bread, buns, cake, etc.  
 C = Curry herbs, chutnies, etc.  
 D = Useful in drinks, cups, etc.

F = For cooking fish.  
 G = Flavouring for green salad.  
 H = Honey herb.  
 L = For linen-cupboard (anti-moth).  
 M = Cooking certain meats, soups or sauces.

N = Cooking new potatoes and other vegetables.  
 P = Pot-pourri.  
 S = For stuffings.  
 V = Vinegar.

pot marjoram, camphor and cotton lavender could well grow there too.

There is space also in herbaceous borders for the gaily coloured alkanet, borage, bergamot, marigold, opium poppy and fragrant cranesbill, while rue, bay, lavender, rosemary and sweet cicely can provide a background. "Ha!"—I can hear you say—"Any nitwit knows that herbs are cut before they flower," and in many ways you would be right, particularly if you are making tarragon vinegar. But personally I like flowers and I think that they add gaiety to the herbary—so I cut some and let the others run to flower, just for the hell of it. Indeed,

some like fennel, dill, anise, caraway and coriander provide salading and flavouring while they are green, but are mainly grown for the seeds, dried and put by for home-made curries. Poppy, above all, has no use to me except for its seeds—I have not, as yet, taken to drying the juice and smoking *that*, as my gardeners did in the Punjab!

But that is enough—no two people will agree on just what they should do with anything and where they should grow it. God forbid that they should! In this stereotyped, mass-produced age the one thing to be said for gardening—and even more for herb gardening—is its infinite variety. Over to you!

## ‘TERYLENE’ FASHIONS

‘Terylene’ is the wonder fibre, derived from oil, discovered in 1939 by J. R. Whinfield of the ‘Terylene’ Council when working in the laboratories of the Calico Printers’ Association. The fibre is extremely strong; it stands up to a lot of washing without deteriorating; and when cut into short lengths, known as staple, it will make a yarn which has the softness and warmth of wool but wears many times longer. Here are some examples of clothes made from ‘Terylene.’



The pleated skirt is made from 'Terylene' staple fibre and the blouse from 'Terylene' check voile. Both come up looking like new after washing without pressing or ironing.



*Pure 'Terylene' satin makes this a really practical négligée, quick drying and needing no ironing. (Opposite) An evening gown by Susan Small made from 'Terylene' satin, which is completely uncrushable. It is set against a background of 'Terylene' bobbins. These bobbins of 'Terylene' yarn are spun in the Hillhouse factory of Plastics Division in Lancashire and then sent to the textile manufacturers.*



*This girl is wearing a complete 'Terylene' outfit. Her twin set is made from pure 'Terylene' staple fibre. Her skirt is also pure 'Terylene' spun on the worsted system in Yorkshire.*



*This vest and briefs are designed by Supacut Garments from 'Terylene' tricot and are now on sale in the shops. All the trimmings, including the ribbons and waistband elastic, are also made from 'Terylene.' 'Terylene' garments have a really warm feel.*

## I.C.I. NEWS

### DR. C. J. T. CRONSHAW: A TRIBUTE BY THE CHAIRMAN

I WAS very glad when the Editor asked me to write a few lines of appreciation of the work of my old friend Dr. Cronshaw, who retired from the Company at the end of last year. His services to I.C.I. ever since our Company was formed have been so outstanding that it is only right that something should be written now about what he has done.

I first got to know Cecil Cronshaw when in the early 1920's I used to visit Blackley Works as a sort of liaison officer, since we at Nobels had a financial interest in the British Dyestuffs Corporation, of which Blackley was an important part. My memories of those visits are invariably associated with meeting Cronshaw, and every few months he seemed to be in a position of greater importance.

If I remember rightly, it was in 1915 that Cecil Cronshaw joined Levinstein & Co. (the then owners of Blackley Works). The dyestuffs industry was at that time in a period of hurried and chaotic expansion due to the sudden cutting off of our supplies of dyes from Germany on the outbreak of war. Cecil Cronshaw quickly rose to a position of responsibility. In fact it was in no small way due to his great abilities as an organic chemist that the difficult problem of making intermediates for our dyes (intermediates which had previously always been imported from Germany) was overcome.

By the end of the war in 1918 Cronshaw was recognised as one of the leaders in the dyestuffs world. I think it was in 1918 that Du Pont sent representatives over to Manchester to buy up some of the Levinstein processes for making dyes. Cronshaw took a trip to America in that year and negotiated with Du Pont about this deal. Shortly after this he was sent to Germany as the controller of chemical industry under the occupation.

But he was not to remain there long. Early in 1920 a

paralysing blow hit the dyestuffs industry when Lord Sankey delivered his famous judgment which declared illegal the prevailing prohibition on imports of dyes from Germany.

Manchester was hit by a flood of imported German dyes, and at one time it looked as though the newly formed British Dyestuffs Corporation would be submerged.

By this time Cronshaw was back at Blackley; and I think I am right in saying that he had very considerable influence in helping to keep Blackley Works going and preventing it from being shut down altogether under the flood of German competition.

Eventually, after about a year, the British Government was made to see the unwise of this unrestricted German dumping of dyes, and a system of licensed imports was instituted. This meant roughly that only where we could not make the dyes at home could these be imported under licence from abroad. The dyestuffs industry now had a chance to go ahead once again, and the story of its renaissance up to the flourishing Division it is today is inextricably woven with the name of Cronshaw.

Then in 1926 I.C.I. was formed, with the Dyestuffs Corporation as one of the four big groups concerned in this huge merger. Cronshaw, who had been a vice-chairman of the Dyestuffs Corporation, became the technical director of what is today called Dyestuffs Division. In this capacity he played a large part in expanding the group's activities, not only because of his abilities as an organic chemist, but also because he proved himself such a successful negotiator in bringing about the various amalgamations which increased the size of the group's activities. Few people will perhaps remember now the names of the other dyestuffs companies which joined I.C.I. in these years. Emco, Scottish Dyestuffs, and Oliver Wilkins all threw in their lot with I.C.I. in 1927. British Alizarine joined us in 1931, Leech,



Neal & Co. joined in 1936, the Alliance Co. in 1939, Trafford Chemical Co. in 1940, and Albert Products in 1942.

Throughout this period of growth and consolidation Cronshaw's hand was always at the helm. It is he more than anyone else who was responsible for creating the organisation which directs the Dyestuffs Division today. And it is through Cronshaw more than any other individual that the Division came to acquire a sound morale and business philosophy.

Moreover, Cronshaw was always a great believer in research, and his faith in research has certainly been justified by events. It was because of the research done at Blackley that I.C.I. was able to take the lead in the development of rubber chemicals in the 1930's and later in the development of pharmaceuticals, with the result that the pharmaceuticals side is now so big that it constitutes a separate Division.

The outbreak of war in 1939 saw Cronshaw as chairman of the Dyestuffs Division, and it was only natural that in due course he should be invited to join the Board of I.C.I. This occurred in 1944, since when he has been the Group Director in charge of Dyestuffs and Pharmaceuticals and also our Personnel Director.

Amid all this work he also found time for outside interests. He has always taken a close interest in his old University of Manchester; in fact he is on its board of governors. He is also a director of the Manchester Ship Canal and of the District Bank. Now that the time has come for Cronshaw to retire it needs no words of mine to tell you that the Board will be the poorer for his absence. Not easily will we replace his breadth of knowledge and experience. My colleagues and I wish him every happiness and health in the days to come.

### I.C.I. Board

It was announced recently that Mr. D. J. Robarts had been appointed to the I.C.I. Board as a non-executive director. Mr. Robarts is a director of Robert Fleming & Co. Ltd., merchant bankers, and of other companies; he is also joint deputy chairman of the National Provincial Bank Ltd. and deputy chairman of the Union Discount Company of London Ltd.

On the executive side of the Board Mr. R. A. Banks has succeeded Dr. Cronshaw as Personnel Director, and the following temporary arrangements have been made: Dr. R. Holroyd will collaborate with Sir Wallace Akers in discharging the functional duties of Research Director, with the intention of succeeding him on his retirement in due course; Mr. C. R. Prichard will collaborate with Mr. W. F. Lutgens, Development Director, with a view to succeeding him on his retirement, and to the extent that he has time available will also



S. A. Whetmore  
C.B.E.

W. K. Hall  
O.B.E.

C. H. C. Payne  
M.B.E.



E. Saunders  
M.B.E.

W. E. Mitchell  
B.E.M.

D. A. Wallace  
B.E.M.

collaborate with Mr. E. A. Bingen and Mr. R. C. Todhunter in discharging the functional duties of Overseas Director. Dr. J. Taylor will act as Director responsible for the direction of the Metals Division, Sir Arthur Smout retaining responsibility for the remainder of Group D—that is to say, Nobel Division—until his retirement.

### New Year Honours

Six I.C.I. men received awards in the New Year Honours List:

MR. S. A. WHETMORE, who was awarded the C.B.E., retired in 1951 from the post of joint managing director, Billingham, after 23 years with I.C.I. Since his retirement he has remained a consultant to the Company.

MR. W. K. HALL, awarded the O.B.E., was appointed works general manager at Billingham in December. Since joining the Division in 1929 as a research chemist he has held positions in the Nitrogen, Phosphate, Commercial and Products Departments, and until his recent promotion was work study manager.

MR. C. H. C. PAYNE is also a Billingham man; he receives the M.B.E. Mr. Payne has been a draughtsman in the Constructional Design Section since 1926. Before that he worked for Armstrong Whitworth in Spain.

MR. E. SAUNDERS, also awarded the M.B.E., retired in 1951 after 48 years' service, all spent at the Silvertown Works of Alkali Division. He joined at the age of 14 as an assistant to the timekeeper, and retired as works manager. During the whole of this time he had only 1½ days' sick leave—and this because of an injury he received while dealing with an incendiary bomb.

MR. W. E. MITCHELL, awarded the B.E.M., is a technician in the Flexible Fuel Tank Department of Marston Excelsior Works of Metals Division. During his 12 years with Marstons Mr. Mitchell has travelled to many parts of the world. He accompanied the King's Flight during the late King's tour of South Africa in 1947, being responsible for the behaviour of the flexible tanks in the Viking aircraft; and he has visited Royal Air Force stations in the East and Far East and made many journeys to the Continent in connection with servicing flexible fuel tanks.

MR. D. A. WALLACE, also awarded the B.E.M., is superintending foreman at the Dumfries Factory of Nobel Division. During his 29 years with I.C.I. he has specialised in nitrocotton manufacture; at Ardeer he rose to be foreman of cotton nitrating, and in 1940 he was appointed superintending foreman of nitrocotton manufacture at Dumfries Factory, which was then under the Ministry of Supply.

### HEAD OFFICE

#### Mr. M. W. Perrin, C.B.E.

A member of Research Department whose work for the Atomic Energy Division of the Ministry of Supply has on two occasions earned him public recognition resigned recently. He is Mr. M. W. Perrin, C.B.E., of whom Sir Wallace Akers, Research Director of I.C.I., writes:

"His many friends in I.C.I. will have learned with regret that Michael Perrin has left the Company to become chairman of the Wellcome Foundation.

"After being educated at Winchester, New College, Oxford, and Toronto, Perrin joined I.C.I. in the autumn of 1929. He was immediately sent to

Amsterdam to work with Professor Michels in the Physics Department of the university.

"At the end of 1933 he entered the Research Department at Winnington; there he became manager of the High Pressure Section, and it was under him that the work leading to the discovery of polythene was carried out. In 1938 he came into Dr. Slade's Head Office Research Department.

"When I was asked, in November 1941, to take charge of the new government organisation to develop nuclear energy, Perrin came with me, at my request, as my principal assistant. He worked with me in this organisation, first under D.S.I.R. and later in the Ministry of Supply, until I left it in 1946, when Lord Portal took charge.

"Perrin acted as Deputy Controller (Technical Policy) in the Division of Atomic Energy, Ministry of Supply, until June 1951, when he returned to I.C.I., to the Head Office Research Department.

"During the time that he worked in the nuclear energy project he carried out many delicate negotiations, all with conspicuous success. These involved close co-operation with the corresponding American and Canadian organisations, and the safeguarding of our relations with these bodies could not have been in better hands.

"In 1946 he was awarded the O.B.E. and in 1952 the C.B.E. in recognition of his work in the Division.

"A great many people will be very sorry to see Perrin leave I.C.I., and it will be a loss to the Company; but when we heard of the search for someone to take over the chairmanship of the Wellcome Foundation we thought it only right that this very interesting and important post should be brought to his notice.

"I.C.I. is glad to see the merits of one of its staff recognised by his appointment to this responsible position, and he leaves us with every wish for a happy and successful future in his new career."

#### Reservist Promoted

Mr. A. D. M. Purdon, a statistician in Sales Control Department, has become the first R.N.V.R. officer to reach the rank of Commander in the Instructor Branch.

His promotion comes after five years' service in the R.N.V.R. as Instructor Lieutenant-Commander; but when he joined the

R.N.V.R. after the war Mr. Purdon already had seven years' service behind him as an R.N. "schoolie." During the war he saw service afloat in cruisers off Norway and in the eastern Mediterranean; later he was appointed scientific adviser to the School of Naval Air Warfare.

Mr. Purdon trains with the London Division of the R.N.V.R., whose headquarters is a ship moored in the Thames at Blackfriars, H.M.S. *President*.

### ALKALI DIVISION

#### Award for Crescent Photographers

The Crescent Photographic Society at Winnington Works in the Alkali Division were very successful in scoring the highest number of marks and in winning the Greenall Rose Bowl in the annual lantern slide competition of the Lancashire and Cheshire Photographic Union. Each year there is keen competition between more than a hundred photographic societies in the union to win this award, which has been in circulation since 1926.

Three monochrome lantern slides, one each from H. Clayton, G. Foulkes and S. Pollard, all of the Engineering Department at Winnington, were given the highest average score by the judge in competition against the giants of the Manchester and Liverpool photographic societies.

Mr. H. Clayton's slide was of the cloister of an old church in Normandy; Mr. Foulkes' shot was taken during an office lunch-time when the snow was on the ground at Marbury bathing pool; Mr. Pollard's picture was of two children pushing their way through a line of washing on their way home from school.

### BILLINGHAM DIVISION

#### Synthonia Club loses Star Rugby Player

At the end of the year Billingham said goodbye to Mr. J. W. Best, who is being transferred to the General Chemicals Division at Runcorn as manager of the Plastics Workshop.



Mr. J. W. Best

Joe Best has been a pioneer in the technique of fabricating articles from 'Alkathene' and similar substances and has been employed on this work at Billingham since its earliest days; but it is as a truly great rugger player that he will best be remembered at Billingham. He came to Billingham in 1937 from Henry Smith's School, Hartlepool, and within a few weeks was selected as full-back for Durham County at the age of only 17. He played in 23 county championship matches between 1937 and 1951 (5 before and 18 after World War II), and is considered by many to be very unlucky not to have been capped for England. His great skill has helped Billingham Synthonia Rugger Club to rise to one of the best on the north-east coast, and he will be very greatly missed.

#### They will see the Coronation

Three I.C.I. people who are certain to see the Coronation—and without paying for seats—are Messrs. A. Jordan, P.

Martin and D. Pope of Billingham. They are all N.C.O.s in the 2608 (North Riding) Light Anti-Aircraft Squadron of the R.A.F. Regiment, and have been chosen to represent the squadron at the Coronation. They do not know yet if they will march in the procession or be among the troops lining the route; whatever their duties, they will undergo two weeks' special training at a London barracks in April and stay in London for two weeks at Coronation time.

Sergeant Jordan was in the regular army—he was a company quartermaster-sergeant in the last war—before he joined the Auxiliary Air Force. At Billingham he works in the Oil Works process laboratories, as does Corporal Martin. Corporal Pope is a process worker in the cyanide plant.

Three members of the squadron will go to London as reserves. One of the reserves chosen, L.A.C. J. Attridge, also works at Billingham, and another is employed by British Titan Products Ltd.

## DYESTUFFS DIVISION

### Pink Elephants at Manchester University

Eight hundred children between the ages of 12 and 17 saw pink elephants at Manchester University in December. The children were the audience at a Christmas lecture given by Dr. T. Vickerstaff, an assistant chief colourist of Dyestuffs Division, entitled "Colours and how we See Them."

Faced with the difficulty of combining scientific interest with the Christmas spirit, Dr. Vickerstaff leavened his talk with practical demonstrations; the most popular of these "conjuring tricks," as he called them, was one in which the children saw pink elephants before their eyes after staring soberly for a few seconds at a screen picture of a green elephant on a pink ground.

"Colour," Dr. Vickerstaff told his audience, "surrounds us every day. There is colour in dress, in the home, in art and



(Photo: Evening Chronicle, Manchester)  
Dr. Vickerstaff demonstrates to a young audience at Manchester University

science, in television, photography, and navigation by land, sea and air. The study of colour covers such diverse topics as lighting engineering, electronics, chemical structure, the optics and physiology of the eye, and finally the psychology of vision."

## GENERAL CHEMICALS DIVISION

### Owner of the Runcorn Jackdaw

Many pre-war soccer enthusiasts will remember the Runcorn Jackdaw. On Saturday afternoons in 1938 the bird would fly on to the Runcorn football ground and perch on the home team's cross-bar; as often as it did so, Runcorn won the game. But when thousands of people turned up that year for the historic match against Preston North End they were disappointed to see Runcorn defeated 4-2: the Jackdaw had failed to arrive.

Owner of the defaulting bird was Mr. Peter Barnes, a plumber in Castner-Kellner Works. Mr. Barnes is a specialist bird fancier still, and he has kept stranger birds than jackdaws in his time. He had his first aviary at the age of 18 and started with a miscellaneous collection of birds. Then he began exhibiting and concentrated on canaries, and in particular on the type known as "the gentleman of the fanciers"—the Yorkshire Canary.

For the past three years Mr. Barnes has exhibited foreign birds, winning countless prizes. One bird in particular, an Australian red-headed gouldian finch, has won him many firsts and special prizes. Another, the queen whydah, was awarded a Special Best at the Liverpool Police Show recently. This bird, with a spice bird from India and a gold-breasted waxbill, were due to be shown at the national show at Olympia, and Mr. Barnes had fondest hopes of a win.

The keeping of foreign birds calls for large aviaries. In his back garden Mr. Barnes has two, and a heated room with a thermostatic control where the birds from warm climates spend most of their time in the winter.

## METALS DIVISION

### Mr. H. E. Clive, O.B.E.

A career clearly marked "Apprentices, please note" has ended with the retirement of Mr. H. E. Clive, who joined the King's Norton Metal Co. in 1910 as a toolmaker and left the service of I.C.I. in December 1952 as a member of the Metals Division board and chairman of the Marston Excelsior advisory board.

Mr. Clive's outstanding technical skill and abundant energy quickly brought promotion, and in seven years he had achieved the rank of departmental manager. The first world war found him in charge of cartridge case manufacture at a Government agency factory, and in 1938, after a long spell on ammunition production at Kynoch Works, he travelled to Pretoria to set up an ammunition factory for the South African Government. The second world war took him to the United States, where he worked for six years as a member of the British Purchasing and Supply Mission—duties which earned him the honour of an O.B.E. in 1944.

At a time of life when many men would be thinking about their approaching retirement Mr. Clive tackled an entirely new



Mr. H. E. Clive

job—that of building up the Marston Excelsior factories to fresh heights of peacetime activity. Under his vigorous and determined leadership events moved rapidly at Wolverhampton and Leeds, and after six years he can truthfully claim that his latest mission has been accomplished.

This tribute, which many industrialists would envy, was paid to him in the course of a farewell presentation:

"In what he achieved at Marston's Mr. Clive proved himself something of a superman, but in his relations with employees at all levels he has never been anything but human."

### A Hundred Years Old

Modesty has always been a watchword of Elliott Works, and it is characteristic that so important an event as its hundredth anniversary received no publicity until the annual pensioners' dinner at the end of 1952 provided a particularly appropriate opportunity.

In a hundred years of steady progress Elliott Works has seen both a busy suburb and a great company grow round it. Selly Oak was just a collection of two or three cottages when W. Elliott & Sons opened their metal-rolling and wire-drawing business on the banks of the Birmingham/Worcester Canal, and undoubtedly the rapid expansion of this firm contributed largely to the growth of Selly Oak into the thriving industrial community it is today.

Elliott's, already famous in the non-ferrous metal trade by reason of their association with Charles Green and George Frederick Muntz, were among the original constituent companies of I.C.I. Today their wire-drawing plants at Selly Oak and King's Norton are among the best equipped in the world, and more than 600 people have reason to bless the enterprise shown by their predecessors of a hundred years ago.

### Marston Millionaires

The word "million" is on everyone's lips just now at the Paul Street Works of Marston Excelsior Ltd. The excitement, however, has nothing to do with football pools or other "get-rich-quick" schemes. The million in question refers to a million hours—2½ years in working time—when not a single employee has lost so much as a day through a works accident.

To achieve this record under ideal conditions would still be a notable achievement, but our friends at Paul Street have done more than that. Their factory is an old and rambling four-storey building with many stairways and passages which most people have to use many times during the day, and the work itself is by no means free from hazard. Then, too, the working population has doubled in the course of the million-hour period—and still the record remains unbroken.

To mark the occasion, the management of Marston Excelsior entertained the local safety committee to lunch and invited Mr. J. B. Nevitt, Director in charge of Safety, and Mr. E. E. Britton, Division Safety Officer, as guests.

Mr. Nevitt, commenting that this was the first time that a Metals Division factory had gone so long without accident, read the following letter from Sir Ewart Smith, Technical Director of I.C.I.:

"I have just heard with great pleasure of the Marston Excelsior Works record of a million man-hours without a lost-time accident. I shall be grateful if you will convey to the management and workers of the factory, particularly the Works Council and Safety Committee members, my warmest

congratulations on this splendid effort. I hope that as a result of the excellent work being done at Marston Excelsior the record will continue unbroken for a long time to come."

Mr. Nevitt added that a roll of honour was kept in Head Office, London, of all works which achieved this distinction, and concluded by congratulating all who had contributed to setting up the record, particularly Mr. Spittle, Mr. Smith, Mr. Nash, and members of the Safety Committee, who, with Mr. Clive's encouragement and support, had achieved so much under difficult conditions.

## NOBEL DIVISION

### Director Retires

Mr. E. Rigby, a member of Nobel Division board, retired at the end of December. Before coming to Scotland in 1913



Mr. E. Rigby

to work on Clydeside he served his engineering apprenticeship with Crossley's, Manchester, trained at the Manchester School of Technology and had served the National Gas Engine Co. at Ashton-under-Lyne for a year and a half. He had not long settled in Scotland when he saw an advertisement for draughtsman with Nobel's Explosives Co. at Ardeer. He took the job, and so began a long career during which he did much important engineering work for the Company and the country.

In 1937 he became works engineer of Ardeer Factory, but soon

he left that post to help in the planning and building of govern-

ment agency factories under the direction of the late Mr. Adam

Wilson. In that all-important task he made an outstanding contribution, which was of great value to the country.

Thereafter he was made deputy chief engineer, Nobel Division, under Mr. J. R. W. Maxwell and Mr. Maxwell's successor Mr. J. E. Braham. From early in 1950 until his appointment to the Nobel Division board as adviser and consultant on engineering matters Mr. Rigby was chief engineer of the Division.

### Technical Service gives Battle

When the 20th Century Fox film *Single Handed* comes to be shown, Nobel Division can take its share of the credits. Readers of C. S. Forester's novel *Brown on Resolution* will recollect the action in this dramatic story and realise why explosives and an explosives expert were needed in making the film of the story.

Mr. Bill Rankin of Technical Service Department was in Malta for over six weeks while the location unit shot scenes on or near the island. The Navy also co-operated in this venture by lending the cruisers H.M.S. *Cleopatra* and H.M.S. *Glasgow* and the fast minelayer H.M.S. *Manxman*. These ships performed the intricate battle sequences which are the central incidents in the story.

Battles at sea, to be realistic, need expert effects. The job of providing gun-flashes and noises simulating the effects of direct hits in a sea encounter and the waterspouts thrown sixty



Nobel technical service man Bill Rankin prepares fuses for gun effects in the film *Single Handed*

feet high by near misses must be engineered carefully. Mr. Rankin took control of these affairs and summoned up the necessary "magic" from his store of high explosives, electric detonators, gunpowder, thunderflashes, black smokepots and



One of Mr. Rankin's near-misses on the cruiser Cleopatra

special flashing mixtures and lycopodium pots for flame effects.

The waterspout effect was neatly done by towing a line of three floats well behind a fast motor fishing vessel which moved alongside, then away from, one of the cruisers. Each float carried a high explosive charge, and when the moment for the effect arrived the cameras were started and the charges detonated. Glorious waterspouts were the result.

Stars in the film are Jeffrey Hunter, Michael Rennie and Wendy Hiller. Some further studio work is to be done before the film is completed.

#### George Medallist Retires

A man who won the George Medal and the I.C.I. Bravery Award for an act of courage at the beginning of the last war

retired recently. He was Mr. J. R. Douglas, safety officer for the last nine years at Ardeer Factory.

Mr. Douglas started with Nobel's in 1912, and during his service he became an acknowledged expert on propellants. He received his awards for bravery for checking a fire in an explosives building—"an act of splendid courage," said Mr. J. E. Lambert, Division production director, recalling the occasion at a farewell presentation to Mr. Douglas.

Many people will remember seeing the portrait of Mr. Douglas that appeared in the series of I.C.I. advertisements "Portraits of an Industry."

#### Mr. J. M. Cooper, M.B.E.

His friends in Nobel Division and throughout I.C.I. learned with profound regret that Mr. J. M. Cooper had died in a road accident at Colwyn Bay on 13th December. Mr. Cooper had been staff manager of Nobel Division since 1st October, 1951.

He was an Edinburgh man who, after graduating from Edinburgh University, joined the staff of Roslin Gunpowder Mills, Midlothian, in 1920. From Roslin he came to Ardeer in 1929 as a research chemist, and after some years in the laboratories he went to Operating Department.

Just after the second world war began he was transferred to the Ministry of Supply Factory, Dalbeattie, where he was assistant works manager until his appointment as manager of the Ministry of Aircraft Production factory at Bowhouse, near Kilmarnock. The value of the work he did there was recognised by the award of the M.B.E. in 1946.

When the war ended he returned to Division as deputy Division labour manager. His kindness, sympathy and friendliness earned for him the confidence and respect of employees in Nobel Division and the trade union officials he met in his work.

#### PLASTICS DIVISION

##### *The Horseguard on the Calendar*

Walking through the officers' mess at Combermere Barracks, Windsor, recently, Cpl. J. A. Anders of the Royal Horse Guards noticed a picture on the wall that made him pause a moment to look closer. It was a fine colour print of one of the "Blues" in full dress regalia on mounted sentry-go in Whitehall; as he peered at it he realised to his great surprise that the



Left: Corporal Anders receiving a memento from Mr. B. F. Dean (Plastics Publicity). Right: As he appeared on the calendar.

picture, which was on a Plastics Division calendar, was of himself and his sleek black horse, Tom. Back in his room Cpl. Anders sat down and wrote to Plastics Division asking if he could have a copy of the picture. The sequel was an informal presentation to the corporal in Whitehall on 13th December of a copy of the calendar, together with a pair of nylon tufted military hairbrushes as a small memento of the occasion.

The picture has a very special value for Cpl. Anders, for Tom died just before he received it. With Tom he had taken part in all kinds of state duties—Queen's guards, musical rides, tattoos and ceremonial escorts were some of them—and they became the best of friends.

#### *Museum Treasures Reproduced by P.V.C.*

Some of the priceless treasures hitherto only on view in the British Museum are now being made available to other museums—thanks to 'Welvic' P.V.C. plastic. The originals are far too valuable to be allowed outside the museum itself, but by a method evolved in their Research Laboratory reproductions of such fidelity can be made that even experts find it difficult to distinguish them from the originals except by means of the official stamp shown on the left.



Reproductions can be made of any metal objects, such as coins, plate and buckles, by the new method. Moulds of both sides of the object are taken in P.V.C. and coated with powdered graphite to render them electrically conductive. In an



(Photos: British Museum)

Left: A fourth-century silver offertory dish being filled with P.V.C. Right: The original dish and the completed replica.

electro-plating bath the moulds acquire a coat of copper. The P.V.C. is then stripped off and the two copper shells are soldered together and plated with the appropriate metal to form a replica that preserves every intricate detail of the original.

#### *Glassblower in TV Burlesque*

Mr. Homer Last, the scientific glassblower whose slapstick comedy has rocked many Welwyn audiences and who will be remembered by other I.C.I. people for his part in the film *Panorama* No. 3, made his television debut last December. It was in an excerpt from Ralph Reader's Gang Show, televised

from Golders Green Hippodrome. Dressed in appropriate costume, Mr. Last played the part of Plenty in a hilarious skit on a village pageant and had the audience in fits of laughter. He was also one of the principals in a ballet burlesque, and dressed



Mr. Homer Last as a pearly queen in the 1951 Gang Show

in a long nightgown, carrying a candle and wearing a nightcap he took part in a comedy feature entitled "Well-dressed Men." As a member of the glee singers he seemed to spend more time on the floor than on his feet, much to the delight of the audience.

Homer Last is no newcomer to the Gang Shows. He has appeared in four since the war, and as a very young Boy Scout he took part in similar shows in the late 1930's. Despite his clowning, he takes scouting seriously. He is Group Scout Master of the 106th North London Scout Group at St. Mary's, Tottenham, where he is in charge of 120 cubs, scouts, rovers and seniors.

#### A.E. & C.I.

##### *Staff helps Defence against Mau Mau*

The occasional stifled yawn or drooping head to be seen these days in the Nairobi office of A.E. & C.I. (East Africa) is not due to night starvation or lack of keenness, but to the troubles in the Kikuyu tribal area, of which Nairobi is the centre.

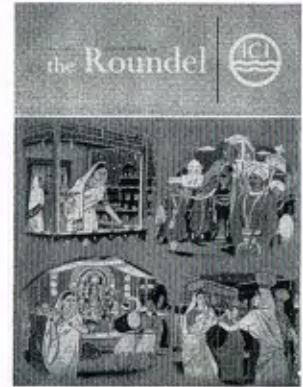
When the Kenya police asked for help in dealing with the emergency almost every male European in the area volunteered for duty. The impact on the A.E. & C.I. office has been that four of the staff (two men and two women, Theresa Wright-Neville and Christine Behr) have been doing duty with the Kenya Police Reserve, which involves an eight-hour shift every second night; the remaining male members of the staff have been on home guard duty with the special police, which involves a three-hour shift every third night, patrolling the districts in which they live. The armament of these home

guard patrols consists of any offensive weapon available, from a privately owned revolver to a golf club. The two lady reservists are doing valuable work controlling from police headquarters the 999 radio cars which patrol the Nairobi area.

### I.C.I. (INDIA)

#### A New Magazine

The I.C.I. employees of India, Burma and Ceylon now have their own house magazine—a quarterly called *The Roundel*, which is edited by Mr. F. S. Binnie.



united and strong *The Roundel* would play an important part.

The second issue is even bigger and better than the first and contains 26 pages of well-presented news and features, ranging from a leading article entitled "Autumn in India" to a nine-page section of Company news items. The four-colour cover and the high standard of printing throughout the magazine do credit to its Calcutta printers.

### I.C.I. (JAPAN)

#### Long Service Staff in Tokyo



The picture above of some long service staff of I.C.I. (Japan) at Tokyo was taken during a recent visit to Japan by Mr. L. H. F. Sanderson, I.C.I. Overseas Personnel Officer. Sitting with Mr. Sanderson (centre) are, from left to right: Mr. T. Machida (23 years' service), Mr. T. Shimuzu, director of I.C.I. (Japan) (32 years' service), Mr. Y. Mitamura (24 years' service) and Mr. M. Takahashi (30 years' service). Standing behind them are Mr. P. R. Gaine, director; Mr.

H. J. Collar, chairman; and Mr. H. G. Harker, managing director.

### A BOOK ON WEEDS

Farmers and gardeners wage an unceasing war on weeds, but how many of them know their enemy thoroughly? To help them in the battle Plant Protection Ltd. has sponsored a new book, *Common Farm Weeds Illustrated*, published by Butterworth's at 15s.

Mr. Kevin Fitzgerald writes:

"For the first time all the common weeds of the farm—and most of these will be found in most gardens at one time or another—are illustrated by careful photographs and described in non-technical language. Over 150 weeds are so illustrated and described, many showing both the ordinary leaf stage and the flowering stage.

"From the farmer's point of view there is an omission from the book which seems a pity. No control measures of any sort are given. This does not affect the gardener, whose chief methods of combating the menace of general weeds are hand pulling and the steady use of the hoe. The Plant Protection lawn and path weed methods of control are already well known to all good gardeners.

"The classic definition of a weed is 'a plant out of place.' For example, the rarest and most beautiful of garden flowers would simply be a weed in a potato field, as would be ears of wheat on the rockery. Some of the weeds illustrated in this book are of surprising beauty. The field scabious is a good example, and the little speedwell. Some extremely beautiful weeds occasionally appear in odd or wild corners of the garden, and there is no necessity to drag these out just because they are so-called weeds. The lesser celandine is always beautiful in a shady corner and cheers the dark days of February or March."

★ ★ ★

### OUR NEXT ISSUE

We are leading the March Magazine with an account by Mr. H. R. Payne (Safety Section) of how our Company has come to win for itself such a remarkable reputation in industrial safety. Since 1929 our accident rate has been reduced by about 75%. This has only been achieved by hard work and imaginative drive on the part of a number of people who have worked quietly behind the scenes. Mr. Payne draws aside the curtain on this unobtrusive work.

Our next two articles both savour of the soil, as is only right in the month of March, when our thoughts are turning to spring. Mr. Harvey, who many people will remember for his article on roses in the March (1952) issue, writes on how to grow tomatoes out of doors; and Mr. Manning of Midland Region contributes an article on Lincolnshire which is an unusually fine piece of writing. He tells the story of the ups and downs in farming which have gone on through the centuries on either side of the Lincolnshire Roman road called King Street.

Lastly Miss Grocock, who retired from work at Nobel House 5 years ago, writes on what life was like for a typist in the City of London at the turn of the century. She manages to capture, too, the real flavour of Victorian England.

"Information Notes," which were dropped this month to make room for two topical features, will reappear as usual in March.

# CONFETTI

## for the funeral

By Peter Rawson (I.C.I. (Pakistan) Ltd.)

Illustrated by 'Capon'



I MUST be the only person who ever threw confetti at a funeral. Here's how it happened.

One evening about two months ago I was sitting with a friend in a pub near my home. We had been discussing the day's racing results. While we were talking I had noticed a little man at the corner of the bar who was clearly distraught. For so mild and timid a man to gulp three whiskies in ten minutes betrayed, I thought, acute emotion, and I wondered idly whether he had staked and lost his pay packet at the races and was plucking up courage to go home to his wife to confess.

Soon after, my friend left. I sat on for a few minutes longer, wondering whether to have another pale ale, when I saw the little man put his hand in his mackintosh pocket and pull out a crumpled evening paper. Holding it close to his horn-rimmed glasses he studied it, then held it away from him and shook his fist at it. Then he ordered another whisky.

I was curious, so I walked over to the bar and ordered the pale ale. I could feel him staring at me, wondering if I would be sympathetic to his troubles. I felt he was the shy kind, so I spoke first. "What's the matter?" I asked.

For an answer he laid the paper abruptly before me and placed a finger on the main headline. He took another draught of whisky.

The headline read, "GOVERNMENT PLANS MORE MINISTRIES." As I read on, it appeared the planners had recommended that the Government should give all its members ministries of their own. If this happened it was thought that not only would the public get better service, but also the back-benchers would have little time or inclination to revolt against the Cabinet. I paused to think of the implications. This would mean some three hundred and fifty ministries—ministries for everything that could possibly affect the lives of the British people. I looked up and handed the paper back to my companion.

"If that doesn't take the Bath bun," he said heatedly, "I don't know what does."

I prepared to pacify him. "You've got to be philosophic about these things," I told him. "It's only evolution."

"Evolution be jiggered!"

"After all," I went on, "look at the promotion there will be in the Civil Service. I've half a mind to run along to the nearest recruiting office this very minute."

"But I am a civil servant!" he shouted, crashing his fist on the bar so that the whisky leapt in his glass. "Do you know who I am? I am CONFETTI!"

"Confetti?" I echoed in surprise.

"Yes, CONFETTI," he said; "one of the Government backroom boys. Have you never heard of me?"

I had to admit that I had not.

"It stands for the Co-ordinator Of Nomenclature For Every Title There Is," he said. "If the Government creates all these new ministries, someone will have to think of titles for them all. The fashion started with SHAEF, UNO, NATO and so on, and now every official body has to have its title."

"And you're the man who thinks them up," I said.

"You don't realise what this means," he went on. "All the members of the Government will keep ringing me up and asking whether their initials are ready. And next week I was hoping to take my first holiday for three years," he concluded ruefully.

The thought of his predicament was appalling and I felt he deserved any sympathy I could offer him. I decided on flattery. "I can't help admiring the enormous strides that have been taken in—er—nomenclature," I said. "The great advances that have been made must be due, in large measure, to your capabilities."

A fleeting smile crossed his face. "I am so glad to have a sympathiser," he said. "I read so many sarcastic letters to *The Times* which question and detract from the importance of my work that it is a real pleasure to hear a compliment."

"You must feel very maligned," I said; "but be assured that I for one fully appreciate the value of your work." I ordered



*I tried to picture him at work . . .*

two whiskies and went on, "Tell me, how did you come to be selected for this important work?"

"There was a very rigorous examination," he replied. "It was organised by what was then the Ministry of Information. For two whole days we sat in the examination room and did crossword puzzles."

"What a terrible ordeal!" I said fervently. "And when you were selected, did they give you any training?"

"I taught myself," he replied. "I trained myself so that I could listen to any speech and convert the sentences into series of initial letters. I found church sermons the best training, as I'm not a deeply religious man and I very seldom became distracted by the subject matter. Now I can listen to anything anyone says and do the conversion. Sometimes I get very useful combinations."

"Don't you find the number of the letters in the alphabet very restrictive?" I asked. "You can't have much scope with only twenty-six."

"That's very true," he replied; "but I think at last my efforts to persuade the Government to add to the alphabet are getting somewhere. They are going to debate in the House next week the question of adding some of the ancient Greek letters to the English language. I am very hopeful of success."

"You have my full support," I lied, making a mental note to write to my M.P. at once to tell him he'd lose my vote if he dared to support the motion. While I was in full sympathy with my friend, I thought this was perhaps going a little too far. Hastily I changed the subject.

"Where do you work?" I asked.

"Whitehall," he answered simply.

I tried to picture him at work. I saw a door with CONFETTI on it in large letters. Inside I saw a desk, surrounded by screwed-up balls of paper a foot deep on the floor. The walls were papered with the letters of the alphabet arranged haphazardly in black and white, the ceiling too. Behind the desk was my companion, his eyes protected with an eyeshade and in front of him bottles of aspirin for his headaches.

A sudden movement made me look up. He had snatched a pencil from his coat pocket and was making a note in the margin of his paper.

"An inspiration?" I asked.

"Yes," he said. "You never know when you may get one." He pushed the paper across the bar towards me and I read the letters MORBID.

"What's that?" I asked.

"That stands for the Ministry Of Rural Boroughs In Distress," he announced with pride.

"I never knew there was such a ministry," I said.

"There isn't yet," he answered, "but there will be tomorrow morning. I shall ring up the Prime Minister and tell him of this and he will create the ministry."

"But, good heavens," I protested, "do you mean to say that just because you think up a title they will create a ministry for it?"

"Of course," he said, "if the title's good enough."

I was suddenly struck by the power this man had in the affairs of the country, and as I questioned him further there was new respect in my voice.

"This is very interesting indeed," I said. "Tell me, do the titles have to be pronounceable?"

"Not necessarily," he replied, "but they are so much better

if they are. Take some of the old titles like MOAF for Agriculture and Fisheries or MOTRAN for Transport. They have a certain mnemonic value, but not so much as if the title is an actual word like MORBID. It's the difference between utility and art."

"So you're an artist!" I breathed with renewed admiration.

"In my small way," he said modestly. He turned over the paper and pointed to another jotting he had made. "This is another inspiration I had earlier this evening—MORGUE. I am sure the Prime Minister will agree there should be a Ministry Of Raiment, Garments, Underwear, Etc. I am particularly fond of the 'Raiment.' It has the medieval touch."

Privately I thought the title a little depressing, but I did not dare say so. After all, I thought, looking after the nation's underwear would be a pretty deadly job. I decided to fête the celebrity with another whisky and ordered accordingly.

"That only makes two ministries," I said. "You'll have at least another three hundred to name."

"They'll come," replied my companion confidently. Suddenly, as though praying to heaven, he turned his eyes to the ceiling. A moment later he turned to me again and announced a new inspiration.

"MOCUP," he said proudly.

"MOCUP?" I echoed in astonishment.

"The Ministry Of Commonwealth Production," he explained.

I considered this as I sipped my whisky. There was something wrong. "But what about the U?" I asked.

"Poetic licence," he said.

I refrained from comment and changed the subject. I found myself wondering about CONFETTI's private life.

"Are you married?" I asked.

"My wife and I separated," he replied. "She was not a very understanding woman. She used to complain that I woke up in the night shouting 'Got it!' and that I'd put the light on and start writing. She used to talk too much, and I found it was affecting my inspiration. I remember once getting the inspiration of a lifetime, but before I could get it down on paper she said 'Have you let the cat out?' I have never recaptured it."

"What, the cat?" I asked.

He gave me an odd look and did not reply.

"Have you got any hobbies?" I said hastily.

"My hobby," he said, "is composing charts for opticians. I love the feeling of irresponsibility that it doesn't matter in what order the letters go. It's the best form of relaxation I know."

"And have you any ambitions beyond your present job?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied. "I want to go into private practice. I don't really like the Civil Service. They sent a time and motion study expert round the other day. I had to get rid of him by peppering him with paperweights. He grew very angry and threatened me with an efficiency expert. It's too much!"

"What sort of private practice?" I asked.

"Business," he said. "I have it all worked out down to the brass nameplate I shall have outside my office. It will have CONFAB on it—Consultant On Nomenclature For All Businesses. Don't you think that's a splendid title?"

I was flattered that the great man had asked me for my

opinion. "You're a genius!" I said. "Yours must be a very highly paid job, isn't it?"

"Only eighteen hundred a year," he replied. "It's very little compared to what I'd earn in private practice. If I were to think up ten business titles a day and charge ten pounds for each title I'd earn twenty times what the Government pays me."

"They'll find it very hard to replace you," I said. "Have you got an assistant who can take over?"

"No," he said. There was a pause and then he seemed to get another inspiration. This time he turned his eyes, not to the ceiling, but to me. His look was one of critical appraisal and lasted for quite thirty seconds. Then he turned to the barmaid and for the first time ordered two whiskies. When he had been served he asked cryptically, "What about you?"

"Cheers!" I said. "What about me?"

"For the new CONFETTI," he pursued. "You seem to be very interested in my work. If you work with me for a month I can pass on to you all the benefit of my training and experience."

The prospect was not unattractive. I would have fame. I would be on Christian-name terms with the Prime Minister. I would have the powers of at least a Member of Parliament without the worry of several thousand clamouring constituents.

"Think it over," he said and dismounted from his barstool. Crossing to a door marked GENTLEMEN, he disappeared.

I found myself wondering what these letters could possibly stand for. I had got as far as "Genuine English Non-Transferable . . ." before I realised the effect my companion's insidious magic was having on me. I decided to leave at once before the spell took complete hold. I drained my whisky. Outside on the pavement I took a deep draught of cool evening air and walked home to bed.

Some of my readers may think I acted a little hastily in turning down such an offer. Let me hasten to assure them that the evening's encounter was not without profit, both to them and to me. That night I woke with an inspiration, as a result of which I have just patented a new card game which I am confident will shortly sweep the nation's homes. It is called "Spot the Title" and will, I earnestly hope, not only bring relief to many bored firesides on rainy days but also be adopted in all school curricula to enable the citizens of the future to become conversant with the work of CONFETTI and his successors. The consciousness that I have filled a real need in education causes me no little pride.

But the pride is not untinged with a little guilt. A few days ago I learned that a knighthood had been conferred on my friend for his invaluable work. Feeling a little guilty at the way I had walked out on him that evening, I rang him up to apologise and at the same time to congratulate him. He seemed depressed and not at all elated at the honour conferred on him. He informed me between sobs that all inspiration had deserted him after the creation of the two hundred and thirty-fourth ministry. He had still not found a successor and the Prime Minister refused to accept his resignation until one was installed. He pleaded with me to reconsider my decision, but I was adamant.

In the pub, the same evening, I read of his suicide.

Whitehall provided no confetti for the funeral, but I took some.



Whitby Harbour and Rooftops

Photo by A. Walker (Billingham Division)